

Executive Registry
76-1362/19

24 MAR 1976

Major General Harold R. Aaron, USA
Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence
Department of the Army
Washington, D.C.

Dear General Aaron:

We have given quite a bit of thought to your recent letter to me suggesting that an NIE or a NIAM be undertaken on the subject of Soviet objectives and the role of military policy in supporting them. As you indicate, this subject has been addressed in a number of recent estimates. We agree, however, that there would be utility in an estimate that seeks to integrate the judgments scattered through these papers.

At the same time, I am bound to say that one should not have excessive expectations for this project. All of our previous estimates have had to acknowledge considerable ambiguities when it came to assessing long-run Soviet objectives. None of them has satisfied the natural desire for detailed predictions of future Soviet behavior. We still lack today the evidence that would resolve such questions, which we dispute both among ourselves and within our own minds.

That being understood, we nevertheless agree that your proposal is a useful one. [redacted] National Intelligence Officer/USSR, has been assigned to organize this project. He will be in touch with you and other members of the intelligence community to define the scope of the paper and get the drafting started.

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Sincerely,

[redacted]
Vernon A. Walters
Lieutenant General, USA
Deputy Director

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